

Dave McCrossen's Story

Dave McCrossen's dreams were modest. He wanted to read a novel, become a ham radio operator, and get a college degree. But an undiagnosed learning disability prevented him from making his dreams a reality. In 1998, everything changed, when at the age of 55, Dave was diagnosed with dyslexia. That was also the year Dave was introduced to Kurzweil 3000.

Editor's note: Dave has been a user of Kurzweil 3000 since Version 1 shipped in 1996. Cambium Learning Technologies is currently shipping Kurzweil 3000 Version 12.



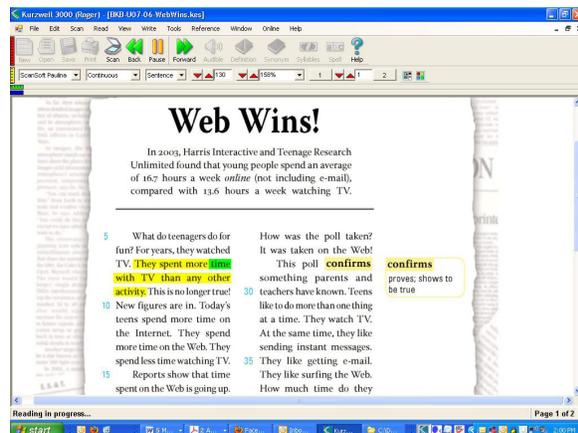
A Familiar Story?

As a child and adult, Dave found it virtually impossible to read and didn't know why. He compensated for the fact that he was unable to track words on a written page by asking a lot of questions and listening more intently than most people. It bothered him, though, that, unlike other people, he couldn't go to a library, check out a book and read it.

Hungering after education, Dave would sign up for adult education classes or university courses. But after a few weeks in a course, he would be so far behind in his reading that he would give up.

Through a series of what Dave calls "fortunate events," someone noticed that Dave had trouble reading and suggested he be tested for dyslexia. "I just thought I couldn't read, and there's a big difference. It was then I realized that I was as normal as anyone else. I was just dyslexic!" Immediately upon being diagnosed with dyslexia, Dave sought help. Through a mix of calling local colleges and seeing print advertising he became aware of Kurzweil 3000. "As soon as I learned about Kurzweil 3000, I jumped on it and ordered a copy for myself." Dave said the day he received his Kurzweil 3000 software package is etched in his mind. "I had a scanner already set up and was prepared for the arrival of the Kurzweil 3000 software."

For Dave, now 67, there are not enough hours in the day for all the things he wants to accomplish. Retired, he spends his time talking with people around the world on his ham radio, using the computer, doing lawn work, and reading novels. Twelve years earlier, Dave never dreamed his days would be so full or that he would be able to communicate with worldwide friends or even finish reading a novel.



Kurzweil 3000 supports reading, writing, study skills and can be used as a testing accommodation.

Setting Goals

Almost immediately, Kurzweil 3000 changed Dave's life. Despite having tried and failed several times to attend a local community college, Dave decided to try again with the help of Kurzweil 3000. This time he was successful. In his late 50s, he received an associate's degree in general education. "I just wanted to prove to myself that I could go to school. I had no particular goal in mind. I just wanted to see if I could accomplish it, and with Kurzweil 3000, I did." Dave's second goal was to be able to read a novel. "The first book I read on Kurzweil 3000 was Tom Clancy's *The Hunt for Red October*." Years before, Dave bought *The Hunt for Red October*, "bound and determined to read it."

But after spending one summer reading the book he gave up, getting only half-way through. “When I got my Kurzweil 3000 installed, the first thing I did was scan *The Hunt for Red October*. I remember this event so vividly. After all these years, I still remember the words in the first paragraph.” After completing this novel, he realized that during his previous efforts to read the book, he missed fifty percent of what the story was about. Using Kurzweil 3000, he read “one hundred percent of the novel.” Since this unforgettable day, Dave has lost track of how many books he has read using Kurzweil 3000.

A Lifelong Goal Finally Achieved

But the seminal accomplishment for Dave was to be able to take the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) exam to obtain his ham radio license. Dave wanted to take this exam since he was a teenager but knew he would not be able to get through the written exam because of his inability to read. Using Kurzweil 3000 Dave was able to take and pass the exam and now has his license to operate a ham radio. “This was more important to me than anything, even going to school. Having my FCC license opened up my world.”

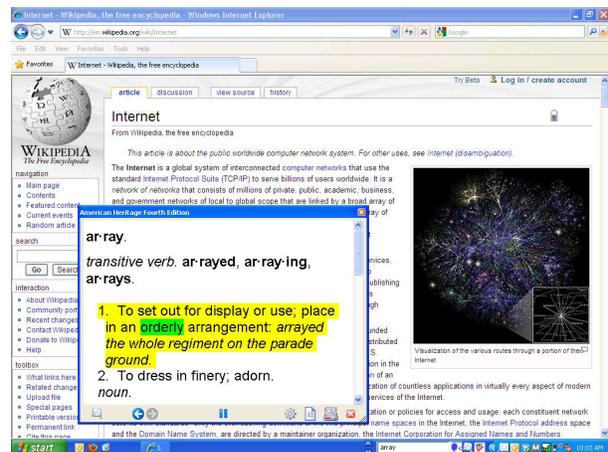
Today, Dave uses Kurzweil 3000 not only to read books, but to keep current with the news. His morning routine includes firing up his computer and Kurzweil 3000, going to his favorite news Web site, and, using the “Read the Web” feature, informs himself about what is happening in the world.

Kurzweil 3000 helps Dave in other significant ways. When he receives documents in the mail that he must understand, for instance, government information, he scans and saves the document into Kurzweil 3000 to read and refer back to if necessary.

“Kurzweil 3000 helps me understand the things I should understand.” Since he started using Kurzweil 3000, there has been yet another benefit—he realizes that his vocabulary knowledge has increased.

An optimistic person by nature, Dave doesn’t bemoan the years before Kurzweil 3000. “I always had an urge to learn. I tried it with books and that didn’t work.” Kurzweil 3000 was “the prescription” for his dyslexia. “Now I have two systems of education,” he says. “The system I developed before Kurzweil 3000 and the system after Kurzweil 3000. It is much easier with Kurzweil 3000 at my side.”

Dave’s world has expanded and his level of enthusiasm for life has increased since he gained the ability to read and talk with people around the world. “Without Kurzweil 3000, none of this would be possible. I have been, and will be, a faithful and grateful user of Kurzweil 3000.”



Kurzweil 3000 has a built in dictionary.